

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PFOR, MILI, PINR, UV, ML

SUBJECT: VOLTAN CONCERN OVER SOVIET INTENTIONS IN MALI

REF: OUAGADOUGOU 2400

1. IN RESPONSE TO YOUR REQUEST (REFTEL) YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DRAW UPON THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN PARAS 2-7 BELOW IN YOUR CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT LAMIZANA. THE INFORMATION IS RELEASABLE TO THE PRESIDENT AND FOREIGN MINISTER ONLY. IT IS EXTRACTED IN PART FROM THE INTELLIGENCE HANDBOOK, COMMUNIST AID TO LESS DEVELOPED COUNTRIES OF THE FREE WORLD, 1975.

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2. SINCE 1960, THE USSR HAS PLEDGED DOLS 86 MILLION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AID TO MALI, THREE QUARTERS OF WHICH HAS BEEN DELIVERED. MOST OF THE AID WAS PROVIDED EARLY IN THE 1960S AND WAS CONCENTRATED IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, TRAINING AND MINERAL DEVELOPMENT.

A. THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETED: AN INDUSTRIAL TRAINING CENTER; HEALTH, AGRICULTURE, AND

POLITICAL SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE SOVIET TEACHERS, DOCTORS, ENGINEERS, AND AGRICULTURAL SPECIALISTS; A CEMENT PLANT AT DIAMOU TO WHICH 12 SOVIETS ARE ASSIGNED. TWO SOVIET TECHNICIANS WORK AT THE SOVIET OPTICAL TRACKING STATION IN BAMAKO.

B. OTHER PROJECTS STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION INCLUDE: AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE OFFICE DU NIGER; DEVELOPMENT OF A GOLD MINE AT KALANA; AND GEOLOGICAL PROSPECTING. THE STATE ENTERPRISE FOR MINERAL RESEARCH AND EXPLORATION EMPLOYS 30 SOVIETS.

C. THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE NOW BEING CONSIDERED: EXPANSION OF THE CEMENT PLANT AT DIAMOU; REFURBISHING OF SOVIET-BUILT EDUCATIONAL AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTERS; PROVISION OF EQUIPMENT AND MEDICINE FOR HEALTH CENTERS; AND CONSTRUCTION OF TWO AIRPORTS.

3. THE ONLY MAJOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITY IN THE PAST FEW YEARS HAS BEEN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KALANA GOLD MINE FOR WHICH ADDITIONAL AID WAS PROVIDED SEVERAL YEARS AGO. THE SOVIET TECHNICAL PRESENCE HAS FALLEN FROM ITS MID-1960S' PEAK WHEN SOME 300-350 PERSONNEL WERE IN MALI. OUR ESTIMATE OF THE NUMBER OF SOVIET ECONOMIC TECHNICIANS NOW IN MALI IS ABOUT 200.

4. THE SOVIETS PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO THE MALI ARMY AND AIRFORCE. A SMALL NUMBER OF SOVIET AIR AND GROUND MAINTENANCE PERSONNEL ARE ASSIGNED TO BAMAKO TO SUPPORT SOVIET-MANUFACTURED TRANSPORT AND CARGO PLANES USED BY AIR MALI. AN UNKNOWN NUMBER OF SOVIET PERSONNEL ARE ATTACHED TO

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THE MALIAN AIRFORCE TO SERVICE ITS SMALL FLEET OF MIG-17S AND MIG-15S. SOVIET PERSONNEL ALSO TRAIN MALIAN AVIATORS, AND THE USSR PROVIDES SPARE PARTS AND REPLACEMENT CRAFT. WITHOUT SOVIET ASSISTANCE, MALI'S AIR CAPABILITY, IN BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY SECTORS, WOULD BE GREATLY DIMINISHED.

5. THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 550 CHINESE IN MALI SERVING

AS TECHNICAL EXPERTS, MEDICAL PERSONNEL, TEACHERS, MILITARY ASSISTANCE SPECIALISTS AND IN CERTAIN OTHER ADVISORY CAPACITIES. THE EMPHASIS OF THE PRC EFFORT IS IN THE ECONOMIC SECTOR.

6. OF THE DOZEN OR SO NORTH KOREANS IN MALI, SOME ARE ASSIGNED TO THE CERAMICS PLANT, WHICH NORTH KOREA BUILT IN 1966, AND OTHERS SERVE IN THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS, WHERE THEY TEACH JUDO. A NORTH KOREAN RICE-CULTIVATION PROJECT IS DUE TO BEGIN SHORTLY.

7. THERE ARE NO CUBAN OR NORTH VIETNAMESE ADVISERS IN MALI. KISSINGER

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